

SAFETY ON THE LINE

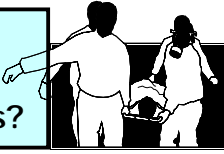
A service of the NASA KSC Spaceport Services Directorate

September 2001 vol. 08

"Life would be infinitely happier if we could be born at the age of eighty and gradually approach eighteen."

- Mark Twain

Facts on Adolescent Injury How big is the problem of injuries for U.S. adolescents?



- At least one adolescent (10-19 years old) dies of an injury every hour of every day; about 5,000 die each year.



- Injuries kill more adolescents than all diseases combined. For every injury death, there are about 41 injury hospitalizations and 1100 cases treated in emergency departments.

- Unintentional injury accounts for around 60% of adolescent injury deaths, while violence (homicide and suicide) accounts for the remaining 40%.

Who is most at risk for injury death?

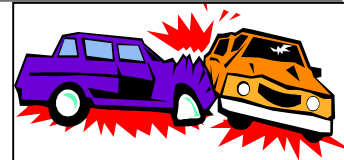
* In general, males are more likely than females to die of any type of injury.



- The most pronounced differences between sexes in injury death rates occur within the older adolescent group (15-19 years). In this group, males are about 2.5 times more likely to die of any unintentional injury and 5 times more likely to die of homicide or suicide. The gender difference is most pronounced in drowning, where males are 10.6 times more likely to die than females of the same age.
- Among adolescents 15-19 years old, one in every four deaths is caused by a firearm. For this age group, the risk of dying from a firearm injury has increased by 77% since 1985.

Most common types of injuries among adolescents

- The largest proportion of adolescent injuries are due to motor vehicle crashes.



- Adolescents are far less likely to use seat belts than any other age group.
- Adolescents are especially vulnerable to fatal crashes at night; they do only 20% of their driving at night, but, at the same time, they have more than 50% of their fatalities at night.
- When adolescents drive after drinking alcohol, they are more likely than adults to be in a crash, even when drinking less alcohol than adults.
- Adolescents also cause a disproportionate number of deaths among non adolescent drivers, passengers, and pedestrians.
- Does alcohol contribute to adolescent injuries? Alcohol is involved in about 35% of adolescent (15-20 years) driver fatalities. Alcohol is involved in about 40% of all adolescent drownings.

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/adoles.htm>

References 1. Runyan CW, Gerken EA. Epidemiology and prevention of adolescent injury: a review and research agenda. JAMA 1989;262:16:2273-2278.



Do you have questions, comments, or an article you would like to submit? Contact Alan at 867-7554, fax number 867-1120, mail code TA-C1 or e-mail him at "Safety on the Line" found in your global address list. Safety on the Line is also on the Web. Go to the KSC home page, then click on KSC internal page, then find us under NASA/KSC news.